

**Amendment to the Claims**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims**

CLAIM 1 (previously presented) An active control releasable ballast system for dive equipment, comprising:

a ballast receiving pocket;

a ballast member stored within said receiving pocket prior to release of said ballast member;

a first strap attached at least proximate to said receiving pocket;

a second strap attached at least proximate to said receiving pocket, said second strap associated with said ballast member; and

a side releasable buckle, excluding hook and loop fasteners, said side releasable buckle having a first section and a second section, said first section of said side releasable buckle attached to said first strap, said second section of said side releasable buckle attached to said second strap, wherein prior to release of said ballast member said first section and said second section are connected to each other; wherein release of the ballast member from within the receiving pocket is achieved through disconnection of the first section of the side releasable buckle from the second section of the side releasable buckle.

CLAIM 2 (Original) The active control releasable ballast system of claim 1 further including a pouch for holding said ballast member, said pouch stored within said receiving pocket prior to release of said ballast member and said pouch.

CLAIM 3 (Original) The active control releasable ballast system of claim 2 wherein said second strap is attached to said pouch.

CLAIM 4 (Original) The active control releasable ballast system of claim 1 wherein said second strap is attached to said receiving pocket.

CLAIM 5 (Previously presented) The active control releasable ballast system of claim 1 wherein said second strap is adapted for attachment to said dive equipment.

CLAIM 6 (Original) The active control releasable ballast system of claim 1 wherein said second strap is attached to said ballast member.

CLAIM 7 (Original) The active control releasable ballast system of claim 2 further including a handle attached to said pouch.

CLAIM 8 (Original) The active control releasable ballast system of claim 1 further including a handle attached to said ballast member.

CLAIM 9 (Currently Amended) ~~The active control releasable ballast system of claim 1 further including~~ An active control releasable ballast system for dive equipment, comprising:

a ballast receiving pocket;

a ballast member stored within said receiving pocket prior to release of said ballast member;

a first strap attached at least proximate to said receiving pocket;

a second strap attached at least proximate to said receiving pocket, said second strap associated with said ballast member;

a side releasable buckle, excluding hook and loop fasteners, said side releasable buckle having a first section and a second section, said first section of said side releasable buckle attached to said first strap, said second section of said side releasable buckle attached to said second strap, wherein prior to release of said ballast member said first section and said second section are connected to each other; wherein release of the ballast member from within the receiving pocket is achieved

through disconnection of the first section of the side releasable buckle from the second section of the side releasable buckle; and  
a slightly curved plate disposed within and attached to said receiving pocket.

CLAIM 10 (Currently Amended) ~~The active control releasable ballast system of claim 2 further including~~ An active control releasable ballast system for dive equipment, comprising:

a ballast receiving pocket;  
a ballast member stored within said receiving pocket prior to release of said ballast member;  
a first strap attached at least proximate to said receiving pocket;

a second strap attached at least proximate to said receiving pocket, said second strap associated with said ballast member;

a side releasable buckle, excluding hook and loop fasteners, said side releasable buckle having a first section and a second section, said first section of said side releasable buckle attached to said first strap, said second section of said side releasable buckle attached to said second strap, wherein prior to release of said ballast member said first section and said second section are connected to each other; wherein release of the ballast member from within the receiving pocket is achieved through disconnection of the first section of the side releasable buckle from the second section of the side releasable buckle;

a pouch for holding said ballast member, said pouch stored within said receiving pocket prior to release of said ballast member and said pouch; and

a slightly curved plate disposed within and attached to said pouch.

CLAIM 11 (Currently Amended) ~~The active control releasable ballast system of claim 2 further including~~ An active control releasable ballast system for dive equipment, comprising:

a ballast receiving pocket;

a ballast member stored within said receiving pocket prior to release of said ballast member;

a first strap attached at least proximate to said receiving pocket;

a second strap attached at least proximate to said receiving pocket, said second strap associated with said ballast member;

a side releasable buckle, excluding hook and loop fasteners, said side releasable buckle having a first section and a second section, said first section of said side releasable buckle attached to said first strap, said second section of said side releasable buckle attached to said second strap, wherein prior to release of said ballast member said first section and said second section are connected to each other; wherein release of the ballast member from within the receiving pocket is achieved through disconnection of the first section of the side releasable buckle from the second section of the side releasable buckle;  
a pouch for holding said ballast member, said pouch stored within said receiving pocket prior to release of said ballast member and said pouch; and

a first slightly curved plate disposed within and attached to said receiving pocket and a second slightly curved plate disposed within and attached to said pouch.

CLAIM 12 (Original) The active control releasable ballast system of claim 2 wherein said pouch having a flap.

CLAIM 13 (Previously Presented) The active control releasable ballast system of claim 1 wherein a location of said side releasable buckle with respect to said receiving pocket provides for a single point active fastening device and handle for active control of said ballast pre-insertion, during use and post release of said ballast.

CLAIM 14 (Currently Amended) A buoyancy compensator, comprising:

a buoyancy compensator shaped body member; and

an active control releasable ballast system attached to said body member, said active control releasable ballast system including a side releasable buckle, excluding hook and loop fasteners, said side releasable buckle having a first male buckle section and a second female buckle section; wherein prior to release of a ballast member said first male buckle section is inserted within said second female buckle section with one or more areas of an inserted portion of the first male buckle section exposed through one or more corresponding openings in said second female buckle section to permit a user to actively control the release of said first male buckle section from said second female buckle section; wherein release of a the ballast member from within a receiving pocket of the releasable ballast system is achieved through disconnection of the first male buckle section of the side releasable buckle from the second female buckle section of the side releasable buckle by the user holding and operating the side releasable buckle.

CLAIM 15 (Previously Presented) The buoyancy compensator of claim 14 wherein said active control releasable ballast system further including:

- a ballast receiving pocket;
- a ballast member disposed within said receiving pocket;
- a first strap attached at least proximate to said receiving pocket; and
- a second strap attached at least proximate to said receiving pocket;

wherein said first section of said side releasable buckle attached to said first strap, said second section of said side releasable buckle attached to said second strap, wherein prior to removable of said ballast member from said receiving pocket said first section and said second section are connected to each other.

CLAIM 16 (Previously Presented) The buoyancy compensator of claim 15 further including a pouch for holding said ballast member, said pouch disposed within said receiving pocket prior to release of said ballast member and said pouch.

CLAIM 17 (Previously Presented) The buoyancy compensator of claim 16 wherein said second strap is attached to said pouch.

CLAIM 18 (Previously Presented) The buoyancy compensator of claim 15 wherein said second strap is attached to said ballast member.

CLAIM 19 (Previously Presented) The buoyancy compensator of claim 16 further including a handle directly or indirectly attached to said pouch.

CLAIM 20 (Previously Presented) The buoyancy compensator of claim 15 further including a handle directly or indirectly attached to said ballast member.

CLAIM 21 (Currently Amended) A ballast assembly for use in a releasable ballast system of a dive equipment, the dive equipment having a body member, said ballast assembly comprising:

a ballast member; and

means for retaining the ballast member to the body member of the dive equipment prior to release, said means for retaining including at least ~~one~~ a male buckle or female buckle section of a side release buckle for mating with the female buckle section or male buckle section, respectively, and a ballast receiving pocket, wherein said side release buckle excludes hook and loop fasteners; wherein prior to release of the ballast member said first male buckle section is inserted within said second female buckle section with one or more areas of an inserted portion of the male buckle exposed through one or more corresponding openings in said second female buckle section to permit a user to actively control the release of said first male buckle from said second female section; wherein release of the ballast member from within the ballast receiving pocket is achieved through disconnection of

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a the first male buckle section of the side releasable buckle  
from a ~~second~~ the female buckle section of the side releasable  
buckle by the user holding and operating the side releasable  
buckle.